Paradigm Shift of Social Work Profession: In Context of Indian Social Work Education

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Abstract
The social work profession is founded on a scientific understanding of human relations and aims to support individuals or groups in exercising their freedom and satisfaction within society. It began as a charitable endeavor and developed into a way to shed light on social issues and give people the confidence they needed to deal with life's unexpected turns in a positive way. As a human services profession, social work addresses micro-to-macro-level societal issues and works to implement necessary reforms. The distinctive core values of social work education, along with its own methodological technique known as the basic along with the auxiliary methods, contribute to the creation of new opportunities for humankind. The development of a PSW (Professional Social Workers) competent cadre through social work education holds the potential to effect tangible changes in society and human existence. However, the main issues with social work education are the lack of originality in curricula and moral guidance for educators and practitioners. The PSWE (Professional Social Work Education) System is primarily related to training methodology, but there have been other issues with social work education as well, like outdated curricula, specialized courses that aren't relevant, and improper fieldwork components. In order to prepare the next generation of PSW having the necessary knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, the current paper offers insights into the challenges facing PSWE. In order to produce more capable change agents, the paper attempts to shed light on the requirement to update the professional social work education training methodology. This paper also gives an overview of the PSWE development in India, sheds light on the true issues facing the field, and offers solutions for improving the field's responsiveness to societal demands.
Keywords: Social Work Education, Curriculum, Training Methodology, Progress, Social Work Profession, Standard

Introduction

In the country, social work education has been a part of the higher education system for approximately 88 years. In 2012, the program celebrated its platinum jubilee, having already lasted 75 years. Numerous factors affect the quality of education, including the curriculum's quality, the institutional structure, the students' competency, the teachers' competency in recruiting and promoting them to higher positions, and the knowledge and skill components that are developed and used in the teaching-learning processes. It is essential that the curriculum of any professional branch of education that deals with societal needs includes those needs. For the social work profession, that directly addresses human problems, this prerequisite is essential.

Since social work was first formally established in India 75 years ago, there have been numerous changes to the academic field. As per Pandey, '*Social Work started with charity-based orientation. After independence, there was a shift towards a welfare-oriented approach in Social Work, which later shifted to a development-oriented approach and then towards justice and empowerment*'. Since the mid-1980s, a number of social work educators have highlighted the shift in emphasis towards justice and empowerment. These educators now advocate for work practice on the macro-level social over individualized practice.

Social work is a global profession with education in most countries. Its reach spans over 114 countries and approximately 3000 social work schools. Moreover, conventional social work, social work schools teach international social work, and cross-national collaboration across training programs is standard procedure. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) have jointly defined the social work profession as follows:

In addition to energizing theories of human behavior and social systems, the social work profession advocates for social change, problem-solving in interpersonal relationships, and the empowerment along with the liberation of individuals to increase well-being. When people interact with their surroundings, social work step in to help. Social justice along with the human rights ideas are fundamental to social work. Social workers promote social change, interpersonal problem-solving, and individual empowerment to improve well-being in addition to energizing theories of human behavior as well as social systems. Social workers assist with environment interactions. Human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.

The challenges that liberalization and privatization have imposed on India's economy and culture must be considered in the country's current social work practice. PSW practice ought to be concentrated on providing a clear and concise explanation of the profession and the social work goals in both national as well as international contexts. Redefining social work practice is necessary to make it more adaptable to the effects of globalization and sensitive to contextual needs. A clear understanding of the Indian context and experiences is necessary for this. To meet the demands of a society that is constantly changing, contextual social work practice must continuously evaluate how it is operating.

Social Work is a vibrant profession and always deals with Individuals, Groups, and Communities at large to address the issues & challenges and develop intervention strategies to overcome the problems of society. It addresses human issues and prepares competent cadres of PSW with a right-based and helpful approach to bring concrete change in society along with human life.

Data and Method

This paper's main aim is to evaluate professional social education provided in India. This paper also gives an overview of the development of PSWE in different Indian states, sheds light on the actual issues facing the field in some of those states, and offers solutions for improving the field's responsiveness to the demands of society. The current paper is descriptive in nature and is based on secondary data that was gathered from a range of relevant published sources.

Historical Review of Social Work Education in India

India has long practiced social work. It began as a pre-modern, charitable response by individuals or groups to societal issues, and it developed into a more modern, professionalized field that is emphasized by formal theory along with practice training. In the 1930s, North Americans eager to spread the new treatment approaches which have been successfully helping many Americans deal with personal issues brought social work to India. Open to new ideas, India then started to establish social work schools modeled after the United States and incorporating all of its fundamental ideas, led by the United States. Social workers eager to introduce their ideas to a new culture traveled to colonial India with adventure. Consequently, the first social work school now known as the Tata Institute of Social Sciences was founded in the year of 1936. In 1974, the Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work in Mumbai began offering the 1st undergraduate program in general social work.

India's social work education system is reportedly expanding because of the both local and international demand. Private colleges' social work departments have grown over the past 25 years due to India's NGOs and the private sector's need for social workers. Marketization, outsourcing, and Western-style HR policies are changing Indian social workers' world views. The radical paradigm of structural social work is taught in major social work schools; however, since practice takes place in the community, it lacks the rigor and depth that social activism strategy demands. India has had 85 years of social work education, but it has not established

a council to oversee and implement professional standards, develop national standards, or ensure coherence across curricula or a licensure process.

Table 1 Phases of Social Work Education in India

Decade	Phase	Development
1936-1946	Phase-I: Inception	Establishment of Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work
1947-1956	Phase-II: Experimentation	Delhi School of Social Work
1957-1976	Phase-III: Expansion	Many social work education institutes came in to force in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu
19977-1986	Phase-IV: Stagnation	This phase has not seen many new social work education institutes.
1987-	Phase-V: Explosion	Indian social work education institutions surpassed 200 in this phase.

Review on Social Work Education

The Second UGC review committee notes that social work schools typically make no attempt to find out how motivated their students are or to examine their personality traits, which would be helpful in determining whether or not they are a good fit for the field. Institutions could attract more motivated applicants and candidates with higher aptitude if they could come up with an innovative pre-admission process to introduce candidates to the program in general. Most students in many institutions enroll in the Professional Social Work Education Program because it's their only option.

Recommendation of Second Review Committee of UGC

Examine the current social work education programs - courses, fieldwork, and research - critically in light of the country's needs, the development of norms at each level to aid in the establishment of equivalency, and education at the doctoral, post-graduate, undergrad, and paraprofessional levels.

• Make recommendations for ways to implement the changes you think should be made to these programs in order to make them more relevant and meaningful.

Examine and recommend adjustments or adjustments to administrative issues like patterns of funding, relationship to different academic structures within their respective universities, and procedural issues.

Analyze the current role that social work education institutions play related to the National Service Program and make recommendations for how they could most effectively support the program's goals.

The necessity of introducing such contemporary subjects into social work education through some means has been brought up by the Council on Social Work Education. The review committee noted that despite 72 years, there is still no syllabus because efforts are constantly made to adapt the current curricula to the current circumstances.

UGC Curricula Model 2001 has suggested a sample curriculum that social work schools should start using in June 2002. The information is extremely pertinent and helpful. However, there is a risk as to whether the schools in the recognized region of India could successfully implement the aforementioned syllabus. Either a lack of literature in their libraries or a teacher shortage resulting from training and experience should be the cause. When implementing the new syllabus that the U.G.C. recommends, caution must be exercised.

UGC LOCF Model 2019 Learning Outcome-based Curriculum Framework introduced by the University Grant Commission under the Chairmanship of R. K. Singh for Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) in 2019 with the aim of The Values and ethics of Professional Social Work Practice, Professional theory, practice skills, and lifelong learning. Together with the various stakeholders-teachers, and students-it also presents a positive outlook for the profession's future and encourages lifelong learning and the pursuit of knowledge.

Progress of Social Work Education Institutions across the Country

Following the founding of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (formerly known as the Sir

Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work; it was renamed TISS in 1944), numerous social work education institutes were established nationwide, but only a small number of them were able to uphold the standards and caliber of social work education. Since its founding, the TISS has consistently been ranked as one of the nation's top institutions for social work education. After 84yrs of the commonness of Social Work Education, the position of the Social Work Profession is still not well grasped in society there are many misconceptions about the Social Work Profession situation of profession is still very poor in society. The concept of PSW must be well recognized and should be given first preference at policy and governmental levels but unfortunately Professional Social Work concept is missing from the minds of people whether at is governmental level or in the general public. Therefore institutes across the country which offer Social Work Education should associate together and maintain their quality and standard so that it will reflect positive change in society.

Table 2 Overview of Social Work Education in India since 1936

Year	Development of Social Work Education
1936	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai
1947	Indian Conference of Social Work (ICSW)
1948	J.K, Institute of Sociology, Ecology and Human Relations, Lucknow
1949	Baroda School of Social Work now The Faculty of Soical Work, Baroda
1952	Madras School of Social Work, Chennai in (then Madras)
1959	Association of Schools of Social Work in India (ASSWI)
1965	University Grants Commission (UGC), Government of India First Review of Social Work Education
1968	1st Encyclopedia of Social Work in India
1975	UGC's second review committee Report Titled Review of Social Work Education in India: Retrospect and Prospect. Social Action, Social Policy, and Social Welfare Administration papers were introduced. (Commissioned)
1987	2nd Encyclopedia of Social Work in India
1986	Curriculum development centre at TISS, Mumbai
1990	Report of the curriculum development center in social work
1997	Declaration of Ethics of Professional Social Work
2000	National Curriculum Reframe Exercise and The Third National
2001	UGC Curricula Model of Social Work
2003	National Assessment and Accrediation Council (NAAC)
2012	National Network of Schools of Social Work.
2019	UGC LOCF Model (Learning Outcome-based Curriculum Framework)
2020	Introduced National Council of Social Work Education and Practice Bill 2020 to Maintain Quality and Standard of Social Work Education

Source: Compiled by the author through various sources

Table 3 Best Social Work Education Institutes in India

Rank	Institute
01	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, (TISS), Mumbai
02	Rajgiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous) Kochi, Kerala
03	Delhi School of Social Work, Delhi University
04	Madras School of Social Work, Chennai
05	College of Social Work (Autonomous) Nirmala Niketan Mumbai
06	Department of Social Work, CHRIST University, Bangalore
07	Department of Social Work, Centre for Advanced Study, Jamia Millia Islamia University New Delhi
08	Faculty of Social Work, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Source: India Today Survey 2023

Social Work Education Curriculum Training Methodology

Social Work Education is a Professional Academic Discipline that creates scope for students to work in a professional environment to develop and explore professional skills, knowledge, and attitudes in practice which they have acquired in and out of the classroom. Micro, Mezzo, and Macro are the

main levels of social work practice students learn in classroom teaching. Students can effectively drive micro-level change and development by integrating a thorough understanding of the macro system knowledge framework with contextual and ground-level realities.

Training Methodology plays a crucial role to modify and structure the student's personality. Methodology enables students to act independently and think critically and analytically about any subject or issue. Here academicians/teachers' role is most significant to give the best to their students through teaching methodology. Teaching learning should be very active and innovative in which students get the exact thought process of reality. Participatory and experiment teaching learning always helps students to develop their thought processes and it enhances their skills,attitudes,and knowledge.

In Social Work Education there are various segment of teaching through which students gets an exact real picture of the existing social system. It helps them to deal with Individual, Group, and Community level issues and enables them to intervene in resolving the issues by applying scientific and systematic knowledge. Social Work Education is a practice-based human service profession that places maximum emphasis on practical learning in the field. Students have to apply the theoretical knowledge which they acquired in classroom teaching to the field and assess the social situation. Therefore it is the prime responsibility of educators to prepare students with skills and knowledge through proper teaching methodology so that they can learn and understand real situations while applying them to practice.

Table 4 Social Work Teaching Methodology

S. No.	Teaching Methodology	Description	Students Gain
01	Induction Programme	Orientation about the whole structure of the course and major salient features of each course.	Gets clarity about the course which they have chosen
02	Orientation/Exposure Visits	Students are taken to observation visits to various social organizations, rural, tribal areas, and government organizations to explore their social and welfare fields and issues of development.	Students get first-hand exposure to social issues, development, and welfare issues, and how the various organizations address the issues.
03	Skill Labs	Various skill-related workshops are being organized on social issues to develop the personality of the students.	Students are equipped with a variety of skills and strategies. It helps them to deal with problems whenever they come across.
04	Classroom Teaching	Teaching Methods of Case Work, Social Work Research, Group Work, Community Organization, Social Welfare Administration, and Social Action.	It helps them to apply in practice and enables them to deal with Individual, group level, and community levels effectively.
05	Field Work	It's nothing but learning by doing	Students get the opportunity to work closely with social settings, and governmental settings to understand the pattern of their work and various approaches to work
06	Rural Camp	10 days residential rural or tribal engagement.	Helps to understand rural /tribal culture, living patterns, local issues, local authority, local dynamics, developmental needs, etc.

| 07 | Study Tour | Pre-Employment exposure around the nation or world | Gets a chance to visit national-level social organizations as well as international exposure through domestic and international study tours. |
| 08 | Block Placement | 30 days continue fieldwork training in government or non-government organization | Gets the opportunity to work with social organizations even after completion of training. |

Students can effectively drive micro-level change and development by integrating a thorough understanding of the macro system knowledge framework with contextual and ground-level realities. Social Work Training Methodology emphasizes strengthening capacity and developing competence among social work students which includes:

- Technology transfer,
- Rightly integrating social innovation along with social entrepreneurship creates a skilled workforce.
- Participatory and sustainable development practices,
- Macro-Micro research initiatives,
- Evidence-based social work practice
- Capacity-building training for students,
- Field Work Seminar Presentation
- Case studies and discussion
- Screening the documentary /films followed by discussions
- Debates and discussion
- Policy analysis discussion
- Critical thinking laboratories
- Research and experimental labs
- Issue base poster making and presentation
- Roll plays
- Street Theaters
- Computer Aided Learning
- Exposure visits
- Orientation visits
- Immersion camps
- Brain Storming Sessions.

Strong and efficient integration of teaching, learning, training, research, practice, publication, and dissemination components among the student body is brought about by this teaching methodology. These instructional frameworks provide students the ability to act locally while thinking globally. Experts and professional leaders can be developed through appropriate teaching methods.

Paradigm shift in Social Work Education

Paradigm shift in social work education is nothing but reconstructing social work education practice with evidenced based research practice which generates the new theories in social work education to architect the advanced social work education curriculum in the extemporary world. Development of the existing primary methods and secondary methods like Working with Individuals, Communities, Groups, Social Welfare Administration, Social Work Research and Social Action are the need of hours to make social work profession in a comprehensive manner by adopting new technological advancement and use of effective media. Social Work Education is a human service oriented profession and in the current era needs to incorporate the new approaches and advancements to deal with new issues like technological reforms, migration, single parenting, social institutes and consequences.

Table 5 Paradigm Shift in Social Work Education

Key Components	Particular	Description
Paradigm shift in the field of social work profession leads shifting form the traditional methods to more advanced approach which will be research and evidence based at grassroot level. It will address the existing issues in a meaningful way by using advanced technological approaches and modifying social work methods incorporation of transformative pedagogy in social work education.		

Define the Social Work Education Shit in the contemporary world.	Every social work education institutes need to determine the Shift in Social Work Education by adopting uniqueness in curriculum and field work practicum	It may involve changes in existing social work education pedagogy, advancement of research based field work practicum, alignment of curriculum with global standard and incorporation of AI, Data Science, New technology and media in social work education.
Incorporation of Emerging Trends in Social Work Curriculum.	Analyse the contemporary issues in social work education and integrate the indigenous knowledge and emerging trends in social work curriculum.	It may include the contemporary community needs, new approaches in social work research in context of global scenarios. Policy level issues and challenges in practice can be a core part of the social work curriculum.
Development of Community engagement models	Collaboration, Participation and deliberation should be a major part of community engagement to address the existing issues at community level in a scientific manner. Holistic Approaches: Incorporating a broader range of disciplines and perspectives, including mental health, public policy, and community development.	Need to create a holistic curriculum by collaborating with all the social work education institutes to cater the needs of student stakeholders and client stakeholders by integrating public policy issues, community health and mental health issues, migration, old age and vulnerable groups of the community.
Advancement of Technological Reform	Appropriate use of media and technological tools in social work field practice as well as classroom learning can create the positive impacts of lives of human beings through addressing the right issues at the right time.	Social Work Education Curriculum needs to adopt the advanced technology and media to train social work students with technological approach to lead societal issues. Data analytics and use of AI should be a central point of social work practicum through research and evidence based practices.
Emphasise on Human Rights, Social Justice and Advocacy	Human Rights and Social Justice are the central parts of social work education that need to be addressed properly in social work education by training the students with advanced attitude, skills and knowledge.	It seems to be of less importance for human rights and social equality and justice in the social work curriculum. Advocacy and Social Action are the heart of social work education to develop a right based approach among the social work students to lead positive movement to bring the changes in the society. Social Work Education Curriculum should be advocacy centric.

Source: Compiled by Author

Scenario of Social Work Education

At present there have been several social work education institutes offering PSWE at university and college level across the country. However, some begin social work courses without providing fieldwork facilities or a basic infrastructure of qualified and experienced staff, which could lower the standard of PSWE as a whole.

Table 6 Social Work Eduction Institutes of India

S. No.	State	Number of Social Work Institutes
1	Tamil Nadu	104
2	Madhya Pradesh	71
3	Maharashtra	66
4	Kerala	43

5	Andhra Pradesh	42
6	Karnataka	38
7	Gujarat	35
8	Uttarpradesh	22
9	Telangana	14
10	Assam	9
11	Odisha	9
12	Rajasthan	9
13	Uttarakhand	9
14	Chattisgarh	8
15	Haryana	6
16	Delhi	5
17	Meghalaya	5
18	Bihar	4
19	Jharkahnd	4
20	West Bengal	4
21	Manipur	3
22	Puducherry	3
23	Chandigrah	2
24	Himachal Pradesh	2
25	Jammu & Kashmir	2
26	Mizoram	2
27	Nagaland	2
28	Arunchal Pradesh	1
29	Goa	1
30	Punjab	1
Total	30 States	526

Source: Social Work Education Institutes in India by Dr.Sanjay Bhatt

Above table depicts the details of social work education institutes that exist in India. It shows that almost all the states have social work education institutes across the nation; only Tripura, Andaman Nicobar and Lakshadweep don't have any single social work education institute so far. Leading states having social work education institutes are Tamil Nadu (104), Madhya Pradesh (71), Maharashtra (66), Kerala & Andhra Pradesh (42), Karnataka (38) and Gujarat (35). Tamil Nadu is leading first position in social work education institutes followed by Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra respectively.

Curriculum in Social Work in Context and Social Work in Practice

The curriculum is the central part of any educational program and it should be comprehensive and holistic in manner to construct the competencies among the students. Social Work Education is one of the fast growing professions in India and western countries as well. But somehow western countries still maintain their quality of social work education by making a global standard of social work education curriculum. Social Work Education in the context of India, it is found that most of the courses in social work education are being taught by educators referencing the old literature. Primary methods like Case Work, Group Work and Community Organization need to be transformed with the current scenario by creating advanced literatures through evidence based and practice based research approaches. Social Security and Social Entrepreneurship need to be adopted as emerging methods in social work education curriculum to address the social protection needs and livelihood needs of the community. Every social work education institutes to ensure maintaining standard in connection with curriculum. This is the prime responsibility of social work education institutes to develop appropriate skills and knowledge with relevant practical exposure through standard global social work education curriculum.

Table 7 Components of Social Work Education Curriculum

Social Work in Theory	Social Work in Practice
Social Work Institutes ensure that their students will critically analyze social work approaches, theories, link between social work and social sciences and indigenous knowledge in the context of the contemporary world.	Make sure that students will be able to integrate theories into practice with appropriate use of research and evidence based practice during the field work practicum.

Develop the competence among the social work students in context of a deep understanding of current welfare policies, legislative aspects, public policies from local to global level.	Its prime responsibility of the social work education institutes to prepare future leaders of Professional Social Work Practitioners to work for social causes. Educators should have focused on the professional practice of the students by giving current trend knowledge of the policies and laws.
Incorporation of SDGs and Environmental aspects as a special field of learning in social work education will help students to critically work towards green social work through natural resource management.	Prepare the students through proper field engagement in the area of sustainable development, environment and climate change at community level.
Social work education curriculum should be sustainable peace and social justice centric where students will promote peace and harmony in communities.	Make sure that students of social work have an ability to work collaboratively and partnering with so minded organizations, stakeholders and government to address the community level issues in peaceful manner.

The availability of field environments and organizations for fieldwork is crucial to the education of PSW. However, this is not being taken seriously by some institutions that are offering PSWE. Another important aspect is the absence of powerful professional organizations to establish guidelines and fundamental standards for a profession. The professional organizations that are currently in place are either nonexistent or have minimal participation from Professional Social Work Educational Institutions.

Certain institutes lack distinct and organized pre-admission activities that help prospective students become familiar with the curriculum. Furthermore, no additional effort is being made to evaluate the students' motivation or personality traits, which would be very helpful in determining whether or not they are suitable for the profession.

Department of Social Work of concern colleges conducts presentations on PSWE and its scope and possibilities with the intention of attracting students As a result institutes fails to attract large number of students, it may be because,

1. High Fee Structure
2. Lack of Importance about Professional Social Work
3. Lack of Qualified Staff
4. Lack of advertisement and publicity about course
5. Lack of community reach

Measures to Strengthen Professional Social Work Education

• Need to think at policy level by the Government on priority basis to give proper importance for PSWE.
• Existing human resource of Social Work Education need to be updated them continuously.
• Need to recruit qualified and experienced staff to tech Social Work Education
• There should be separate Board of Studies at University level should have meet regularly to revise, modify and update the syllabus time to time as per the needs of the society.
• Building strong alumni network is need of hour to boost Social Work Profession.
• Need to develop reach to unreached approach by social work education institutes.
• Need to strengthen field work component
• Need to always involve project and research base activities to address societal issues by using Social Work Knowledge.
• The Social Work Curriculum needs to be revised as per the needs of the technological era.
• Social Work Education should be advanced with strong research and evidence based practice..

Conclusion

Teachers' personalities and dedication to their profession are key factors in the success of social work education. Teachers of social work are required to properly instill in their students a spirit of service, code of conduct, and missionary zeal. For the Social Work instructors to properly teach the Human Development course, they must be well-read. I believe that practice-led social work education and training are essential. If not, I worry that employers

will dictate it, which will be decided by educational experts, students, and clients in equal measure. Professional social work educational institutions and associations cannot install the same mindset in professionals and students until they deeply integrate themselves into society. Regretfully, professional social work educational institutes continue to function as mere educational establishments, no different from other types of establishments. Professional Social Work Institutes must be characterized by community partnership, which guarantees the process of learning by observation. The real training ground for professional social workers is society. Only a deep engagement with contemporary social issues will influence the student's ability to handle related problems in the real world once they are employed. The typical fieldwork schedule is incredibly insufficient for generating qualified professionals. It is need of hours to reframe field work practicum aligning with high quality investigative and evidence based research practice. Another aspect is to adopt the new methods of social work and redesign the existing social work methods with proper intervention models to address actual and factual issues of community level.

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